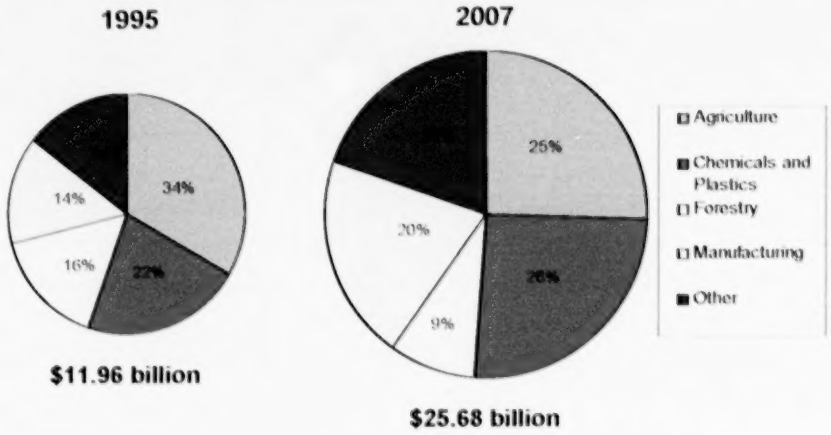
Alberta's Export Trends 1995-2007

Between 1995 and 2007, Alberta's non-energy exports increased in value by 115%, from $12 billion to $26 billion. The growth in manufacturing (up 203%), chemicals and plastics (up 151%) and "other" (up 196%) sector exports stand out.

Though the relative importance of agriculture and forestry exports has declined, both have seen their exports increase in absolute terms. It should be noted that cyclical variations between 1995 and 2007 are hidden by this chart.

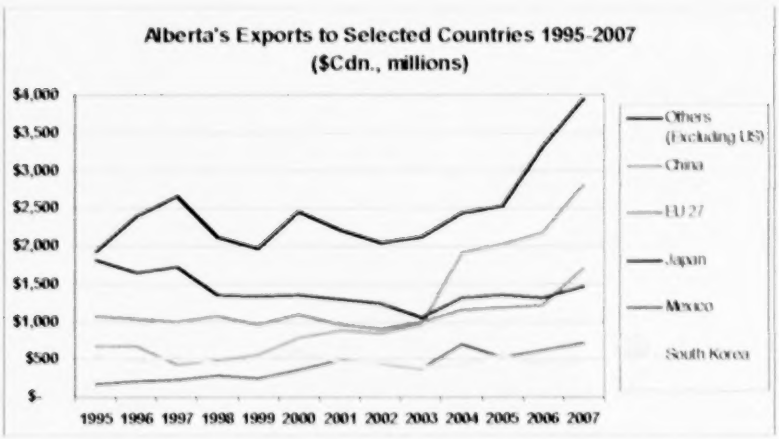
Alberta's Non-Energy Export Sectors 1995 vs 2007



$11.96 billion

$25.68 billion

Countries



Overall, non-US exports have increased 79% since 1995, from $6.2 billion to $11.1 billion.

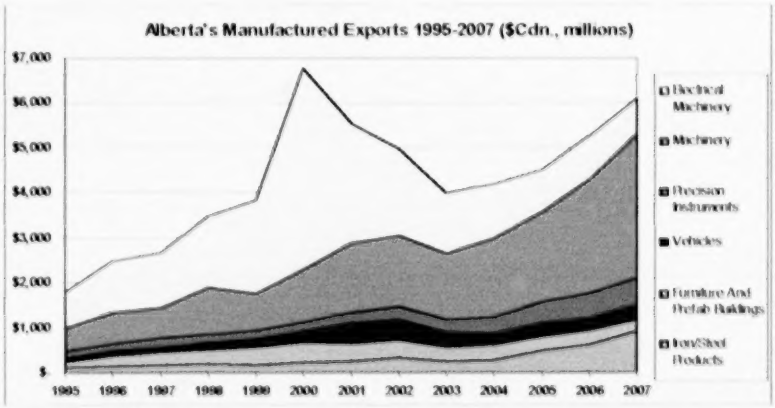
The rise in exports to China, up 311%, and Mexico, up 306%, particularly stands out. Exports to China were worth $2.8 billion in 2007 and exports to Mexico were worth $715 million.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing sector exports grew 203% between 1995 and 2007, second only to energy export growth.

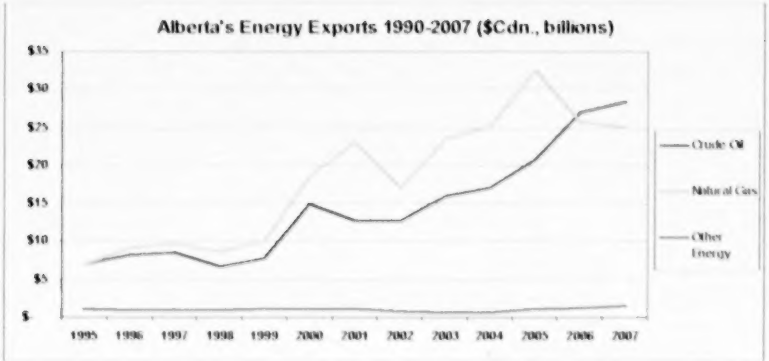
Much of the exports of machinery, precision instruments, vehicles, prefabricated buildings and iron and steel products can be attributed to spin-offs of technology developed for oil and gas exploration and recovery in the province.

The spike seen in electrical machinery exports seen between 1999 and 2003 was primarily due to strong growth in telecommunications parts exports during the "dot com" bubble.



Note: for the purposes of this review, "Manufacturing" has been defined as the following: machinery (HS 84), iron and steel products (HS 73), electrical equipment (HS 85), precision instruments (HS 90), vehicles (HS 87) and furniture and prefab buildings (HS 94). Other manufactured goods have not been disaggregated.

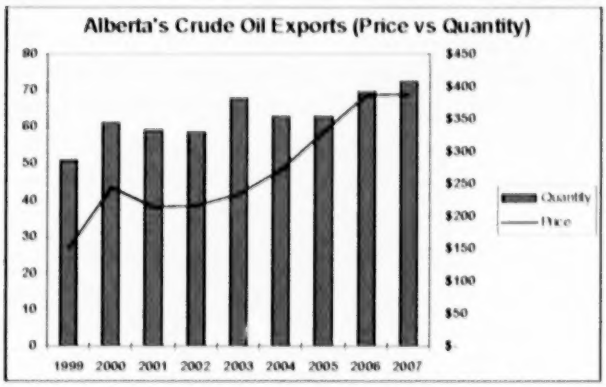
Energy Exports



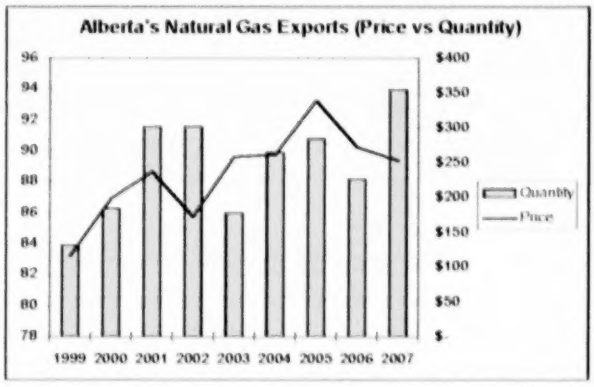
Energy sector exports increased 270% between 1995 and 2007. As seen in the charts below, this is attributable to increases in both volume and price.

Crude oil has recently surpassed natural gas to become Alberta's top export product. While natural gas was exported at record volumes in 2007, it has suffered from falling prices.

99% of Alberta's energy exports are sent to the U.S.

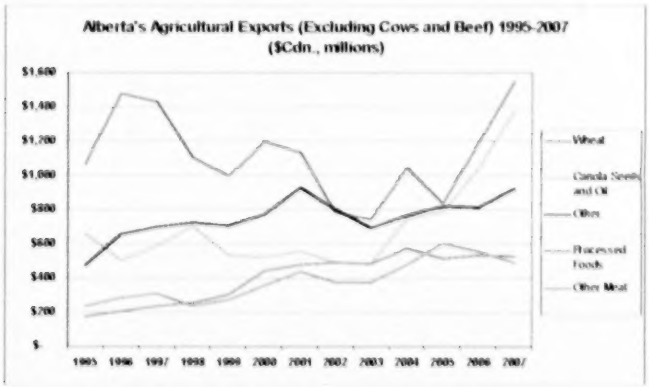


Quantity is in millions of cubic meters. Price is in Canadian dollars per cubic meter.

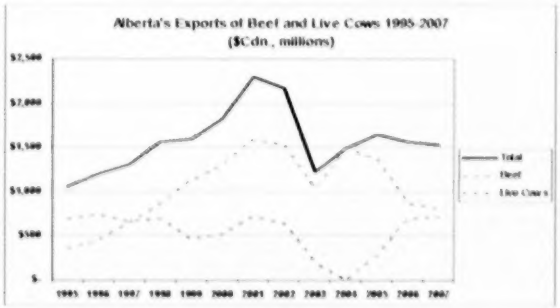


Quantity is in billions of cubic meters. Price is in Canadian dollars per thousand cubic meters.

Agriculture



Overall, the agriculture sector increased exports by 65% between 1995 and 2007. Processed foods increased the most, up 197% to $526 million in 2007, followed by canola seeds and oil, up 110% to $1.4 billion.



The impact of BSE on exports of live cows and beef can be seen in the chart above. The U.S. closed its borders to live cows from Canada in May 2003. Exports of boneless beef cuts increased in compensation as slaughter capacity grew in Alberta. Once the border reopened, though, exports of live cows resumed their former level and exports of beef fell. Total exports of beef and live cows remain far below their 2001 peak.